Indian and Foreign donors for rehabilitation of Latur victims;

(b) the total amount earmarked by the Central Government for rehabilitation of these victims and the total amount actually spent on this work so far; and

(c) the manner in which Government are monitoring the utilisation of the funds meant for earthquake victims?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) Government of Maharashtra have received a donation of Rs. 255.48 crores from Indian and foreign donors for the rehabilitation of the victims of the Maharashtra earthquake of 1993. In addition, Overseas Development Administration (ODA), Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the United Nations Development Programme have also sanctioned grants totaling Rs. 79.00 crores.

(b) Government of Maharashtra is implementing a Maharashtra Emergency Earthquake Rehabilitation Programme at a cost of Rs. 1181.80 crores with a World Bank credit of Rs. 756.00 crores. Out of this, an amount of Rs. 788.50 crores has been spent by the end of January, 1997.

(c) Government of Maharashtra is constantly monitoring the utilisation of funds through a special Project Monitoring Unit (PMU).

Import of deadly fungus

20. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news report appearing in "The Indian Express", dated January 6, 1997, under the caption "Caution thrown to winds in importing deadly fungus";

(b) if so, whether the agricultural scientists have opined that the fungal spores in soil can be transmitted by wind or insects to standing crops unless experiments are restricted to a glass house; and

(c) if so, the precautions taken while making experiments to check the deadly effects of the fungus on crops?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The fungus in question, *Aspergillus parasiticus* occurs widely in nature in India. As the fungus is soil borne, the question of its dissemination through wind or insects does not arise.

(c) No experiments are being conducted with this fungus. The question of its containment in glasshouse, therefore, does not arise.

Centrally-Sponsored Schemes for farmers in Punjab

21. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of amount spent under the Centrally-sponsored schemes for farmers for increasing agricultural production in the country, particularly in the State of Punjab during the year 1996-97;

(b) the number of farmers benefited under the Schemes, District-wise;

(c) the target fixed for the purpose during this period by Government and achievements made thereunder; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) An amount of Rs. 555 crores has been released to the States during 1996-97 till December, 1996 for increasing agricultural production in the country. This includes Rs. 19 crores released to Punjab during 1996-97.

(b) to (d) A list of Schemes implemented in Punjab is enclosed (*See* below). It is difficult to quantify the targets/achievements regarding the number of farmers benefitted as a result of implementation of the scheme as benefits flow both directly and indirectly.